

SENATE BILL 197

Define Court Transcripts and Provide for Adjustments in Transcript Costs SB197

Good morning. Mr. Chairman, Senators, thank you for the opportunity to address you, and I ask for your support of SB197.

My name is Sharon Gaughan and I am an official court reporter for the 13th Judicial District in Billings. I have been reporting in Montana since graduating from reporting school 25 years ago.

I wanted to share with you some of the additional community involvement I have as a reporter and additional services I provide. I have presented career information to middle and high school students and mentored court reporting students.

I am active in our state and national reporting associations, which enables me to keep abreast of the latest technology, reporting issues, and projects involving reporters. One such project I've participated in is the Veterans History Project, wherein I transcribed the oral histories of WWII veterans for The Library of Congress in an effort to protect and preserve the history of our U. S. Veterans.

I have obtained my beginning, intermediate, advanced, and realtime certifications in reporting and maintain those by attending classes and seminars offered in Montana and nationwide. I have also taught seminars to fellow Montana reporters; and, when requested, demonstrated realtime for the University of Montana Law School, the Judge's Association, the Western Montana Bar Association, and the Missoula New Lawyers Association.

I have provided captioning services for the Montana Association for the Deaf's annual convention and for hearing-impaired litigants.

I have provided realtime, which is an instant voice-to-text translation of what's being said in court, for the three judges I have worked for since 1993. A conservative estimate of free pages of rough transcript would be approximately 285,000. I also provided roughly 500 pages a year to the Missoula County Attorney's Office and Clerk of Court's Office while employed in that district and currently provide approximately the same amount to the Judge's law clerk, local counsel, and litigants.

I am proud to serve the citizens of Montana by reporting and safeguarding the court record. I would urge you to support SB197.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Gaughan, RDR, CRR
Official Court Reporter, 13th Judicial District